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Davis Announces Grants to Train 1,462 Workers at Four Southwest Indiana Companies

INDIANAPOLIS — Lt. Gov. Kathy Davis announced today that two Southwest Indiana companies will receive training grants valued at \$565,550 from the Indiana Department of Commerce's Skills Enhancement Fund.

"The state of Indiana is helping Hoosier businesses become more competitive in the marketplace," said Davis, who leads the state's economic development efforts as director of Commerce. "These grants give employees immediate access to the latest skills using new and improved equipment. This investment benefits both the business community and our state's workforce."

- **Jasper Seating Company Inc.**, Jasper, is the recipient of a \$4,100 grant to train 194 incumbent employees following the company's \$1 million investment in new equipment and building upgrades. Jasper Seating Company began by manufacturing wood institutional chairs. They maintain their own lumberyard, mill room and rare steam-bending capabilities, enabling them to control the complete manufacturing process. Their training includes Spanish as a second language, problem solving, process control, machine maintenance and machine operation.
- **Bristol-Myers Squibb Company**, Mount Vernon and Evansville, is the recipient of two grants totaling \$284,500 to train 573 incumbent and 30 new employees following the company's investment of \$36.9 million in new equipment and facility renovations. Bristol-Myers Squibb is a global pharmaceutical and related health care product company. They are the world's leading provider of cancer therapies and a leader in the discovery and development of medicines to treat cardiovascular diseases. Their training includes tooling, pharmacy training, operator maintenance training, coating training, reliability maintenance and team building.
- **Wabash Plastics Inc.**, Evansville, is the recipient of a \$76,950 grant to train 216 incumbent and nine new employees following the company's \$1.5 million investment in shot molding machines, automation and robotic equipment systems. Wabash Plastics Inc. was established in 1973 as a privately held, custom injection molding company. The company primarily produces products for the refrigeration and heating, ventilation and air conditioning industries. Their training will include basic computer skills, robotics, tooling and maintenance skills.

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- **Spencer Industries Inc.**, Dale, is the recipient of a \$200,000 grant to train 440 incumbent employees following the company's investment of \$3.6 million in new equipment. Spencer Industries Inc. began in March of 1981 as a spin off of Thermwood Corp. They manufacture Thermoformed Plastic parts for the transportation, electronics, appliance, point of purchase, lawn and garden, tanning bed and exercise industries. The company will use the grant to provide training in computers, robotics, forklift operations and machine operations.

The Commerce Department awards Skills Enhancement Fund grants to Indiana companies that undertake capital investment projects. The grants help defray the costs of training new and current employees in basic work skills and company-specific skills necessary to support the project. Companies interested in learning more about the Skills Enhancement Fund or other Commerce programs should contact their regional Commerce office at 800.463.8081, or visit the Web site at www.indianacommerce.com.

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